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HEAVY INDUSTRY IN POLAND

METALS INDUSTRY -- Rzeczpospolita i Dziennik Gospodarczy, No 354, 24-26 Dec 48

After the war, the metals industry was faced with the problem of supplying the market in sufficient quantity to eliminate the widespread shortage of commodities. By 1946, the state heavy and medium light industry reached the pre-war level of production valued at 300 million dollars. In 1947, the prewar level was exceeded by 50 percent and 1948 will see further expansion.

Sales of the metals industry for 1948 amounted to 51 billion zlotys, or 115 percent of the plan (44.5 billion zlotys), compared with sales of 31 billion zlotys for 1947, and 10 billion zlotys for 1946. Of the 1948 production, 35 percent went to state industries, 31 percent to the Ministry of Communications, and 7 percent to state and municipal institutions and private industry. In 1947, the domestic market absorbed 7.6 billion zlotys of the product, whereas in 1948, it absorbed 11.7 billion zlotys.

In 1948, the trend in the distribution of metal products was, in the direction of greater socialization. This was achieved by the organization of: (1) state warehouses; and (2) wholesale distribution centers for the Central Offices of Iron and Steel, Construction, and Technology.

Wholesale distribution to cooperatives increased through the activities of 3,000 village cooperatives, and of the Peasant Self-Aid Cooperative with its network of 300 outlets throughout the nation.

The private capitalistic sector, which started the year with one third of the free market distribution, was systematically eliminated from wholesale activity. This movement occurred gradually to avoid disrupting the flow to large groups of private consumers as well as the general public. There were 180 private wholesale establishments at the beginning of the year. As state wholesale outlets were set up and were able to take care of the needs of the market, the number of private wholesalers was reduced to 30. Further reduction in the private sector is anticipated in 1949.

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At the retail level, state and cooperative outlets accounted for 50 percent of the total, in the ratio of 1:5, respectively.

As an intermediary between producer and consumer, the CHPM (Centrala Handlowa Przemysłu Metalowego - Central Sales Office of the Metals Industry) has two fundamental objectives: to establish the requirements of the domestic market and to coordinate production with these requirements with respect to quantity, quality, and variety. It must have accurate knowledge of productive capacity and of market demand, and on that basis regulate the mutually dependent conditions of supply and demand. For this purpose, departments were set up for market analysis.

Exports of metal products reached 11 million dollars, or 2 percent of total exports planned for 1948. The number of items exported increased from 40 in 1947 to 93 in 1948. The share of commodities in the most advanced stage of production increased from one percent in 1947 to 4 percent in 1948.

In 1947, we exported to 21 nations; in 1948, to 35. Europe absorbed 90 percent of the exports, with 40 percent going to the Balkan countries, followed by Scandinavian countries, the USSR, Levant, and lastly nations overseas.

PREFABRICATED CONSTRUCTION ELEMENTS -- Rzeczpospolita i Dziennik Gospodarczy, No 357, 29 Dec 48

Modern construction no longer relies on bricks and beams. Construction with prefabricated units made of rubble and concrete has proved cheaper and faster. The SPB (Spółeczne Przedsiębiorstwo Budowlane - Public Construction Enterprise), established in 1945 in Żaliborze, was the first plant to produce such prefabricated elements. In the beginning, this concrete plant employed several scores of workers and turned out only curbstones and slabs for sidewalks, produced with manual labor. Today, the plant employs several hundred skilled workers in mechanized production of construction elements.

By the end of the third quarter of 1948, this plant completed its quota for the year with about 140,000 units of hollow brick and over 60,000 top beams, amounting to 41,500 square meters. In addition, it produced 3,500 linear meters of staircase elements, over 12,000 linear meters of doorsills, 16,000 square meters of partitions, 100,000 cement bricks, large quantities of rafters and roofing slabs, 40,000 sidewalk slabs and curbstones, and other valuable elements from rubble-concrete for residential construction.

Similar plants have been set up in Mokotów and Olsztyn.

NEW BROWN COAL DEPOSIT -- Życie Warszawy, No 358, 30 Dec 48

A new deposit of brown coal of good quality has been discovered near Wielowieś. During 1949, tests will be carried out to determine the extent of the deposit and the profitability of working it.

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